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ABSTRACT

A summary of the discussions held by the participants in a 1972 conference on the education of filmmakers in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, is presented. Subjects considered at the meeting included: 1) cinema and television as instruments of culture in contemporary society; 2) the education of the filmmaker as both artist and craftsman; 3) technological and social changes influencing the education of the filmmaker; 4) the diversification of audiences and new distribution methods; and 5) new concepts in cinema education, including interdisciplinary programs and problem-oriented studies and projects. In addition 18 recommendations formulated by the experts in attendance are presented. These deal mainly with the specific kinds of activities relevant to cinema projects and education which the majority of the participants felt it was worthwhile for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to support. (Author/PB)

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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

MEETING OF EXPERTS ON THE EDUCATION OF THE FILM-MAKER FOR TOMORROW'S CINEMA

Belgrade, Yugoslavia, 22-26 May 1972

FINAL REPORT

SUMMARY

The report of the Expert Meeting on the education of the film-maker for tomorrow's cinema which took place 22-26 May 1972 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, includes a summary of the discussions and recommendations formulated by the experts.

During the discussions, the participants of the meeting studied cinema and television as instruments of culture in contemporary society and implications for the education of the film-maker; cinema as a major art form and the education of the film-maker as both artist and craftsman; technological and resulting social changes affecting the education of the film-maker which include video tape recording, cassettes, cable television, satellites, miniaturized, automated and inexpensive equipment, new distribution methods, experimental film movements, new audiences; current trends and new concepts in cinema education including interdisciplinary programmes and problem-oriented studies and projects. The experts also examined directions which indicate future developments in the field of cinema education and made general suggestions for new curricula in cinema education which have relevance to different world needs as well as recommendations for future Unesco action in this field.

This report will serve as reference material to be used in the structuring of a pilot project on the education of the film-maker to be initiated by Unesco within a Member State in 1974.

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting of experts on the Education of the Film-maker for Tomorrow's Cinema, organized by Unesco, was held in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, from 22 to 26 May 1972.

2. The experts were invited in their personal capacity and included 13 educators, authors, critics, historians and directors who work within the fields of film, television and the new audio-visual media(1).

3. Two international non-governmental organizations sent observers who participated freely in the discussions(2).

Purpose of the meeting

4. The meeting was intended to study systems of film and television education existing in different parts of the world, and to analyse these systems in the light of contemporary and projected future environmental conditions and problems that face man. The experts were asked to make suggestions for new curricula in film and television education, and to make proposals concerning the development potential in this field. The immediate purpose of the meeting was to advise the Secretariat in its structuring of a pilot project in film and television education (1973-1974) and the planning of its future programme devoted to the education of the film-maker.

Preparatory work for the meeting

5. The Secretariat of Unesco prepared a working document(3) concerning the education of the film-maker. In addition to this, the experts received, as background documents, eleven studies commissioned in advance of this meeting on different national programmes of film and television education.

Opening of the meeting and election of the officers

6. The meeting was opened by Dr. d'Arcy Hayman, Division of Cultural Development, who represented the Director-General of Unesco and took part in all of the meeting sessions.

7. The experts elected Mr. Momčilo Ilic (Yugoslavia) as Chairman of the meeting; Mr. Satish Bahadur (India), Mr. Paulo Emílio Salles Gomes (Brazil) and Mr. Ola Balogun (Nigeria) as Vice-Chairmen; and Mr. Keith Lucas (United Kingdom) and Mr. Raymond Ravar (Belgium) as Rapporteurs.

B. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Cinema and television as instruments of culture in contemporary society

8. The film-maker can and should play a central rôle in society. He can make a contribution to the major human efforts of our time, especially in those general areas of concern to the family of man, and thus to the United Nations and Unesco, which include human rights, development and the environment; these all can benefit from the particular vision, imagination and creativity of the film-maker.

9. The growing awareness of the need for a cultural democracy is affecting the thinking and aspiration of artists in every country. The explosive significance of film and television makes it imperative that the emergent film-maker should be educated in such a way that he can use the medium with skill, insight and, above all, ethically.

10. Film and television are instruments of great power, directly affecting human co-operation and world peace. Freedom of access to the media is an essential part of the freedom of speech, and thus a basic human right.

11. An ever-increasing proportion of the world's population has need for self expression and communication, to learn to "read" and "write" in the new language of film and television, in order to take part in a local or world dialogue with other human beings.

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(1) See list of participants in Annex.
(2) See list of observers in Annex.
(3) SHC-72/CONF. 25/3.

12. The act of communication affects the course and quality of human lives, and bestows on the film-maker a heavy responsibility to his fellow men. This ethical responsibility must be impressed upon him at an early stage of his education.

13. The film and television medium is an art form, a mass communication technique, an instrument of education, and a "language" in its own right. Thus, there can be no fixed definition of the film-maker's responsibilities, as these arise out of the social-cultural factors active at the time in each country or region, and should, therefore, be subject to continuous review. For the same reasons, cinema education at all levels must be in constant evaluation and change.

14. The right to participate in the cultural life of society should be seen not only to mean taking part in the cultural exchange in a global sense, but also the right to preserve, promote and revitalize one's own culture. "Cultural colonization", which has been a marked feature of the past decade, is one facet of the many cultural changes affecting the world today and has a particular relevance for the education of the film-maker. All societies are both importers and exporters of culture. Individual cultures are often enriched by increased exposure to the media; others have been adversely affected. The cultural heritage can be saturated, overwhelmed, stifled, sometimes generating a crisis of cultural identity and values. In some situations this cuts off a people's history and results in a loss of creative vitality. This phenomenon often affects the technologically developing countries, and can also affect local cultures within technologically advanced countries. It is imperative that those responsible for cinema and television develop a critical awareness of this situation. Film and television education must play a crucial part in generating this awareness. At the same time, it should be recognized that world communications present opportunities for the discovery and development of local cultural traditions at a level never previously possible. The mass manufacture of inexpensive tools for the production and consumption of images and sound, at least at a local level, makes it possible for peoples to present and receive indigenous cultures and points of view. New cultural patterns and forms can emerge from roots which have been lost or partly submerged.

15. The technical training required in the forming of a film-maker is a simple matter: the more difficult problem is instilling within the students a social and cultural awareness. The development in the mass media is one of the revolutionary movements of man.

16. The nature of today's image-oriented society requires people to be visually as well as verbally literate. Film and television as major forms of contemporary art and communication are uniquely relevant to the human needs of this time; they serve both as public arts and as educational environments.

17. In the past, very few people could take part in the cultural dialogue of their time. Today, more and more people can deliver their message to an ever-growing audience.

18. There are two trends or movements today concerning the film-maker as artist; the first, in which the artist functions as an indispensable mediator within society and the second wherein the artist acts outside society as radical and revolutionary. Society benefits more if the energies and vision of the artist can be integrated into the social order without losing his dynamic and unique view. The film-maker as artist provides products of durable value.

19. Cinema and television are changing our way of life now, and will in the future society to a much higher degree. Film-makers are the new professors, masters, who teach us how to live. Until now, cinema education has not paid enough attention to the preparation of young film-makers for the great responsibility they will have. Wide horizons are needed.

The changing technology of film and television

20. Technological development of film and television and the extension of these media have been so rapid that they create not only incalculable benefits but also profound dangers. Vast numbers of the world's population are exposed to new forms of communication for which they are culturally unprepared, and which they often do not control. These problems confront the practitioner and teacher of the media, as well, who are also often unprepared to meet the problems of today or the challenges of tomorrow. For the technologically advanced countries it is usually a question of how to use the media, whereas for the developing countries it is more often how to GET the media.

21. The increasing availability of such devices as cable television, video-tape and cassettes, satellites, multi-media systems, miniaturized and automated equipment presents a spectacular range of opportunities for the immediate future. The diversification of methods of production and distribution results in a comparable diversification of image makers, and confronts them with an increased social and cultural responsibility. These changes involve them increasingly not only with their own local community but also with the world at large.

22. The need to master technology is made more urgent by the overwhelming and often anarchistic development of the media; this presents acute problems for the teacher of film and television. The effects of technology should be to create desirable international images and common understanding and not the standardization of what people say to one another.

23. The scope and rapidity of technological change affecting film, television and related media is so great that verbal descriptions of processes and professions are inadequate and made quickly obsolete. There is need for a new formal language accurately describing the unique situation, in time and place. These descriptive terms are of immediate importance, due to the interdisciplinary nature of film-making and the necessity of a mutual understanding of the languages of the various disciplines. The meeting found it necessary to discuss the meaning of one term in particular as used in the context of these discussions. The term, "film-maker", was taken to include not only the director, but also others involved in the collective, creative processes of film, television and associated audio-visual media. This will apply increasingly not only to the categories hitherto regarded as "professional", but also, in due time, to an ever-increasing population of lay public.

24. The deep penetration of every sector of society by the media makes it imperative for us to give consideration to the ethics of the camera and tape recorder. New techniques present new ethical and legal responsibilities. The possible invasion of privacy can constitute a breach of human rights. We must realize that we not only have the right to "switch on" but also the right to "switch off".

25. "Underground films" began as the way of making films which could not be shown publicly. Although the term "underground film" is new, the phenomenon is not. Today's "underground" film or "gorilla" film often becomes tomorrow's film classic.

26. The immediate future will bring millions of video cassettes into homes throughout the world. Just as the coming of the printed word changed the concept and application of education, so must this audio-visual media explosion bring about a new form of education.

Diversification of audiences and new distribution methods

27. As the media diversifies, so do audiences. Simultaneous viewing by world audiences or by individuals are the two extremes of a spectrum of viewers who can now receive messages via the ever-increasing range of media distribution. The proliferation of audiences with differing needs and tastes requires greater choice in the types of programmes which should be made available. Although large sectors of the world's population have not yet been exposed to moving images, this situation is rapidly changing. Audiences can now be counted in hundreds of millions, thus making film and television comparable to the written word in its scale of impact; indeed they may rapidly overtake print as the basic means of communication.

28. The expansion of the means of distribution of films and television programmes has not been matched by equality of access or control. The control has been largely concentrated in the hands of small and increasingly influential groups. At the same time, the "possibility" of more and more people being involved in the media becomes feasible, creating a powerful argument for the democratization of their use. The diversification of the means of distribution has been matched by an equal increase in the range of subject matter. This, in turn, demands new types of communicator who need educating in new concepts and techniques of production and distribution.

29. In a very short time, we will have "television à la carte", and we will no longer be obliged to "eat within the menu". Cable television and the new distribution methods for video cassettes, etc., will make individual choice possible within the mass media.

New concepts of film and television education

30. Just as there have been changes in film and television technology and form, the philosophy and methodology of education has been rapidly evolving and is closely analogous to the changes taking place within audio-visual media. In the process, there has been created, in the most advanced forms of education, a vast range of teaching-learning situations and an overall concern for man and his environment. Education has a mission to raise the level of life. Film-makers are in a key position to mount this mission.

31. The multidisciplinary nature of film and television should be reflected in their educational structure. In addition to the basic film-television crafts, such subjects as sociology, psychology, anthropology, the arts and humanities, law, perception, etc., can well be included within the educational curriculum of the film-maker.

32. In film and television education, consideration must be given to:

the nature of the film and television medium,
the nature of technology,
the nature of the learner,
the nature of the teacher,
the nature of the learning environment,
the nature of the audience.

The detailed application of each of these categories must take into account widely differing circumstances, and, therefore, no single model will apply to all cultural situations or social requirements.

33. The traditional concepts of film and television education must be expanded to include not only the technical innovations currently available, but those which are likely to become effective in the foreseeable future. Education must face the implications of the expanding rôle of the media.

34. The education of the film-maker must take account of technical training, and, within the compact period of his formal education, assist him in "conceptualizing" through the media. Education should provide an environment in which an artist can flourish and in which the craftsman can be taught to develop his highest level of skill. Technical training is fundamental to creative expression, and the two can never be separated. The film-maker should be regarded as a craftsman as well as artist.

35. The learning environment may take many forms, from the formal institution to the workshop or training centre, and the curricula will reflect this diversity. Curricula should also ensure both team and individual educational experience. While experience in classical film history and theory are of obvious importance, undue emphasis on these aspects may result in isolation from the contemporary social environment in which the film-maker will serve.

36. The student's right to make mistakes while studying is still an integral part of the learning process. Provision for experimentation must be included in all educational curricula for film-makers.

37. The relationship of the film-maker to an audience may be seen as being of critical importance, as is his relationship to the needs of his fellow man. A disciplined examination of the dynamics and architecture of film should exist in a balanced curriculum. Maturity, social awareness and life experience should be counted as assets in candidates for higher film education.

38. It should be recognized that a student's needs and attitudes are constantly changing with the changes in his total environment. Film and television teachers must be aware of these changes and be able to respond to them. It is essential therefore to provide education for the teacher of the film-maker. This is an urgent need, and it is most desirable that distinguished practising film-makers be encouraged to participate in this process, and that teachers themselves be encouraged to take part in the creative, productive aspects of their subject.

39. The need for international exchange is particularly acute in film and television education. This applies to teachers, students and all forms of educational materials, since many schools are the only institution dealing with this area of study in their own country. Study in other cultural environments will add to the general experience of the student and may, at the same time, contribute to his

interpretation of problems within his own social environment. It should be noted, however, that for many students from the technologically developing countries, long periods of absence from their own country may have adverse effects.

40. A common denominator for the student film-maker is his need to "express himself" through film or television. In some countries, the preoccupation with the "feature film" obscures the vital rôle to be fulfilled through film and television in education, information, science, industry, research and other social and cultural applications. The film-maker has increasingly to be aware of his function as artist-communicator-educator.

41. The student is increasingly participating in his own education, and experience shows that he can make a contribution in so doing to the educational process as well as increasing his own insights, awareness and personal skills.

42. As film is a "language" in its own right, it should, therefore, be accorded the same serious consideration within the educational curriculum as a first language or "mother tongue". This applies to every branch and level from primary to higher education.

43. The opinion was expressed at the meeting that, within the field of cinema education, the teaching has been often dull and inefficient and the curriculum static; thus, both staff and students are out of contact with reality. Education is a dynamic process and this should be reflected in the policies, attitudes and techniques of cinema education.

44. Educational programmes for film-makers should establish a bridge between the university or film school and the film-television profession. The question was raised: does the film school kill the creative artist? A related point was raised when reference was made to the old saying "an artist is born, not made". However, it was further stated that poor educational programmes can stifle creative ability in all fields whereas good educational programmes can encourage and nourish the creative spirit.

45. What kind of courses should be offered the student film-maker to stimulate his aesthetic-cultural awareness? One participant spoke of an old man in an African village who was the most highly respected artist in the community; he was also the village house builder and gynaecologist. This man's different social experiences with the people of his village seemed to contribute to the depth of understanding reflected in his art. Recent thinking in the field of cinema education gives consideration within the film curriculum to the need of the film-maker for a variety of experiences and a broad contact with life.

46. Several school structures were described which have been introduced experimentally in different countries; these had in common that they gave the students a wide range of choice in his own curriculum which had most beneficial results to the student, the school and, not least, in diversifying the profession. Examples were given of projects being carried out in the field in which staff and students work directly in the community. This introduces an immediacy and a reality impossible even in the most carefully organized school projects. It creates the opportunity for a multidisciplinary student body to work together.

47. Special attention must be given at this time to cinema education in the developing countries. Persons in these countries wishing to study film-making or television production must be sent abroad to receive their education in conditions quite alien to that of their own country. Once small groups of professionals have been created there soon arises the need for an educational programme within their own country, closely related to their conditions and needs. The staff to teach such a programme have again to be brought from abroad and often with the help of international agencies: this can create further problems of rapid turnover and cultural acclimatization; when schools are finally established, they are sometimes modelled on known patterns from the industrialized countries and can thus be completely divorced from the reality in which its graduates will operate.

48. The basic education of film-makers should be carried out in the country of origin or in a regional institution. In addition, regional co-operation between schools in different nations should be strongly encouraged, so as to make the fullest possible use of resources and research. This is especially so in the early stages of the growth of schools and so that basic data, usually completely lacking, can be put to mutual advantage.

49. Newly independent countries are in search of their own identity and "self-hood". These countries more often possess a rich cultural and aesthetic heritage which can and should contribute to the new art and thus film forms in these lands.

50. The delicate balance between tradition, on the one hand, and development, on the other, must be given special consideration in the education of the film-maker in all situations and most particularly within the technologically developing countries of the world.

51. There is need for the education of film-television audiences. In some parts of the world, courses have been structured within cinema education programmes which take into consideration the growing need for educating the public, which views a rapidly growing amount of film and television programmes.

52. There emerged in the discussions the following general principles and objectives that might be seen as some of the basic elements of cinema education: the multidisciplinary structure of the curriculum; the need for flexibility and change; the co-operative activity of staff and students; social, political and cultural understanding; a scientific capability; the development of professional skills; the ability to formulate new models of the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It should be noted that, throughout the meeting, the participants made suggestions and recommendations for a curriculum in cinema education. These suggestions are those incorporated within the body of this report. The recommendations listed here are those which contained suggestions for future Unesco action in this field.

1. Unesco should publish the results of this meeting, including portions of the reports commissioned as background material for it, in the form of a book which can be widely distributed to educators, educational administrators, students and the general public throughout the world.

2. One or more pilot projects in cinema education should be set up in Africa, leading to the establishment of a regional film school. Assistance should also be given to other technologically developing countries totally lacking or with insufficient facilities for the education of film-makers.

3. Unesco should encourage and support the "twinning" of film schools with emphasis on such liaison between an institution of a technologically developing and an industrialized country.

4. As the film-television medium serves as a language parallel to the mother tongue, Unesco should convene a meeting of experts and take all measures to promote and encourage cinema education as part of the general school curricula at both primary and secondary levels.

5. Unesco should facilitate the exchange of material between film schools by means of establishing a clearing-house activity including the standard collection of educational material as well as student-produced films.

6. Unesco should facilitate the international utilization of literature relevant to cinema education by issuing bibliographies and by supporting translations of the major publications in this field.

7. Unesco should make available suggestions for the education of film-makers by publishing model curricula for film courses designed to meet different geographical, social and cultural needs.

8. Unesco should make possible the exchange of persons and ideas, experiences and results between film students and teachers by organizing regular international symposia.

9. Unesco should organize the regular showing of student films from different parts of the world so that these films, otherwise unavailable internationally, can be viewed by other students, teachers, distributors and the general public.

10. Unesco should assist film schools and institutes in receiving information and documentation concerning the most recent technological innovations within film-television medium, as this information is requisite to cinema education and the planning of future educational curricula in this field.

11. Unesco should initiate an international agreement stating that technical equipment, film material and films needed for the teaching within film schools and institutes should be regarded as teaching aids, and thus included in the "free-flow" agreement concerning such materials. National film archives should also be assisted so as to overcome local and economic obstacles to the international circulation of films, or parts of films, from which no profit will be made, but which are needed by film schools and institutes.

12. Unesco should encourage the continuing adaptation of film curricula to technological, socio-economic, scientific, cultural changes, ensuring the direct participation of students in establishing these curricula.

13. Unesco should give fellowships to advanced film students for studies within periods of not more than one year at schools and institutes in countries other than their own. Special care should be taken to associate these fellows with the authentic culture, the artists and other professionals in the regions of their visits and study.

14. Unesco should promote the education of film educators by means of fellowships, workshops, etc., on teaching methodology and educational theory.

15. Unesco should endeavour, in co-operation with governments and producers of technical equipment for film and television, to stimulate the standardization of this equipment so that new and valid techniques can be used as soon as possible internationally in film schools and institutes.

16. Unesco should encourage cinema education which embodies a sensitivity to the cultural needs of the area being served.

17. Unesco should launch a research project concerning the sociological and cultural consequences of foreseeable technological development in the field of film and television, which will serve as a guide for the education of tomorrow's film-makers.

18. Unesco should support activities carried out by non-governmental organizations in the field of cinema education.

ANNEX/ANNEXE

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS/LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS

Meeting of experts on the education of the film-maker for tomorrow's cinema/
Réunion d'experts sur la formation des cinéastes de demain

Belgrade, 22-26 May 1972

PARTICIPANTS

Satish BAHADUR (India)	Professor of Film Appreciation, Film and Television Institute of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Poona
Ola BALOGUN (Nigeria)	University of Ife, Institute of African Studies, Ife-Ife
Youssef CHAHINE (Arab Republic of Egypt)	Film Director, Cairo
Manuel GONZALES CASANOVA (Mexico)	Director, University Centre of cinematographic studies, Universidad Nacional Autonoma
Momčilo ILIC (Yugoslavia)	Directeur, Institut za film, Belgrade
Bertil LAURITZEN (Sweden)	Director, Dramatiska Institutet, Filmhuset Borgvägen, Stockholm
Keith LUCAS (United Kingdom)	Director of the British Film Institute
Raymond RAVAR (Belgium)	Directeur, Institut national supérieur des arts du spectacle et techniques de diffusion (INSAS), Ministère de l'éducation nationale, Bruxelles
Paulo Emílio SALLES GOMES (Brazil)	Réalisateur de film et Professeur de cinématographie à l'Université de São Paulo
Léopold SCHLOSSBERG (France)	Président Directeur général, Institut des hautes études cinématographiques, Paris
George STEVENS, Jr. (U.S.A.)	Director, The American Film Institute, Washington D.C. and California
Naosuke TOGAWA (Japan)	Dean, College of Arts, Nihon University, Tokyo
V. ZDAN (USSR)	Vice-Rector, State Film Institute (V.G.I.K.)

OBSERVERS/OBSERVATEURS

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Robert W. WAGNER	University Film Association

UNESCO SECRETARIAT

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